

10/24/01



Washington, D.C. 20505

12 October 2001

The Honorable John W. Carlin  
Archivist of the United States  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Dear Mr. Carlin:

In accordance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1228.104, I am reporting the accidental destruction of 97 official personnel files of former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employees. These files, approximately 10 cubic feet, were inadvertently destroyed in October 2000. The files contained personnel performance reports, awards, personnel assignments and training records of employees whose active employment with CIA ended during the period 1995 through 1997. We have been able to reconstitute the training and personnel actions for each employee but are unable to restore performance appraisals and other performance related correspondence or citations.

Per NC1-263-84-12, approved April 28, 1986 said files are to be destroyed:

*"...75 years after the birth date of employee or 60 years after the date of the earliest document in the folder if the birth date cannot be ascertained, provided the employee has been separated or retired for at least 5 years."*

We were not able to ascertain the earliest date of any document placed in any file; we do know the date of birth for each employee. None of the files was eligible for destruction.

The Agency's Human Resource Management office is the custodian of all personnel files, and pursuant to the departure of an employee, retires the file to the Agency records center pending destruction. Information about the employee's retirement benefits is transferred to the Office of Personnel Management and was not affected by this destruction. Employee security, medical and cover files are separate record series and maintained apart from the official personnel file. Those files remain intact.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE - CIA INFO DATE:  
15-Dec-2011

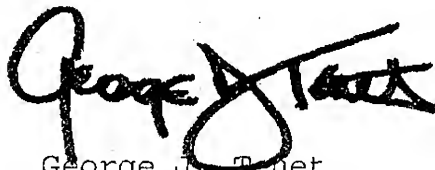
The Honorable John W. Carlin

The destruction of these official personnel files was discovered in March 2001. An employee's file, requested for review in conjunction with a proposed award, was found to have been among 96 other personnel files mistakenly destroyed in October 2000. Immediately, we began investigating which records could be recovered or reconstituted, the actions taken by responsible parties, and remedies to prevent further unauthorized destruction.

Our investigation found that the records were properly identified as personnel records and that the appropriate, authorized disposition (records control schedule item) had been applied to the retirement job. Either through a computer mishap or human error, the date for destruction was incorrectly entered. Our inquiry into the circumstances of the disposition suggested no willful or purposeful intent to destroy these Federal records. Rather, the four person sign-off process (to concur in a destruction) failed to notice the errant destruction date with respect to the type of records proposed for destruction. As a result of the destruction, new instructions have gone out to all component Information Management Officers (IMO). The individuals who concurred in this destruction have received a verbal warning and/or a written reprimand. The software used to calculate destruction dates of temporary records is being rewritten to prevent dates from being manually overwritten, and provide the IMO with a better on-line tool to verify that each retirement job has been assigned the appropriate records control schedule item. I believe the appropriate safeguards have been set in place to prevent any future unauthorized destruction.

If you have questions or require further clarification regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Christophar J. Olsen, Chief, Records and Classification Management Group, Information Management. Mr. Olsen can be reached on (703) 613-1716.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George J. Tenet", with a stylized flourish at the end.

George J. Tenet  
Director of Central Intelligence